

# Summary

This Record of Decision for the John Day River Management Plan and Amendments to the Two Rivers, John Day, and Baker Resource Management Plans is the culmination of a process that began in 1988 when Congress passed the Oregon Omnibus Wild and Scenic Rivers Act and designated portions of the John Day River a Wild and Scenic River.

We are convinced that the best way to protect and enhance river values such as recreation, fish, wildlife, vegetation, scenery, and water quantity and quality is through careful management of the lands within the John Day Basin. Most of our decisions are limited to BLM-managed lands in the designated John Day and South Fork of the John Day Wild and Scenic Rivers and the undesignated portions the mainstem and major tributaries of the John Day River. We see these decisions as important and necessary steps in protecting river values.

The BLM manages 7% of the land within the John Day Basin. The land owned by the BLM within the planning area represents 2% of the land within the John Day Basin. Because of the limited area affected by most of our decisions we have concluded that cooperating with tribal, other federal, state, local government, and private land managers throughout the John Day Basin is key to protecting river values within the planning area. Proper management of lands controlled by these authorities is necessary to ensure that water flowing into the designated river segments is sufficient to protect and enhance river values, including providing fish habitat that will maintain the viability of endangered fish stocks.

The urgent need to protect Outstandingly Remarkable Values (ORVs) is the primary reason for the decisions we have chosen. However social considerations were also part of the decision making process. Where there were two or more alternatives that would equally protect and enhance river values, we have favored, where possible, the alternative that would cost the taxpayers less money, have the least adverse impact on local communities, and support the needs of the greatest proportion of river users.

## Relationship Between the Original and Amended John Day, Two Rivers, and Baker Resource Management Plans

Long-term allocation of BLM-managed lands for various uses and associated management direction is developed through Resource Management Plans, prepared in accordance with BLM planning regulations at *43 Code of Federal Regulations, 1601*. The John Day Wild and Scenic River Management Plan amends applicable Resource Management Plan land use allocations and management direction within portions of the John Day River basin, with emphasis on the designated river segment corridors.

In the John Day River corridor analysis area, there are three approved RMPs which provide management direction:

- John Day RMP (approved on August 28, 1985)
- Two Rivers RMP (approved on August 6, 1986)
- Baker RMP (approved July 12, 1989)

The John Day RMP provides decisions for BLM resources in Grant County. The Two Rivers RMP provides decisions for Hood River, Wasco, Sherman, Gilliam, Wheeler, as well as portions of Crook and Jefferson counties. The Baker RMP provides decisions for all or portions of Baker, Malheur, Wallowa, Morrow, Umatilla, and Union counties in

Oregon, as well as portions of Asotin and Garfield counties in Washington. The only portion of the Baker RMP planning area that overlaps the John Day river corridor is in extreme southern Umatilla County.

The previously approved RMPs have generally established land use allocations and management direction that is protective of river-related values. Many resource management programs are subject to standard BLM manuals, handbooks, or policies that constitute program constraints. These include, but are not limited to, cultural and historic resources, anadromous and resident fish, noxious weed control, wildfire suppression and state air quality rules, etc.

The following table briefly summarizes existing management of key resources and notes when this record of decision modifies existing RMP guidance.

## **Administrative Record**

Some of the key documents in the Administrative Record for this project include ICBEMP documents; BLM's John Day, Two Rivers, and Baker Resource Management Plans; all scoping letters and responses, surveys, reports, and evaluations conducted for the EIS; all appendices attached to this ROD; and both the Draft and Final EIS.

## **Contact Person**

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**Table 1. Existing Management of John Day, Two Rivers, and Baker Resource Management Plans and Amendments Resulting from John Day River Plan Decisions**

Note: Shaded rows indicate resources or program elements that were not considered planning issues for the John Day Plan.

Resource or Program Element	1985 John Day RMP Management Direction	1986 Two Rivers RMP Management Direction	1989 Baker RMP Management Direction	Amended Management Direction For BLM Lands and Resources in the John Day River Corridor
Air Quality	Meet State standards	Same	Same	No Change
Riparian Restoration	Emphasized for protection in livestock grazing allotment plans, mining and road construction. Protected from logging. Protect or enhance natural values to achieve healthy and productive ecological condition. Complete inventories and develop recovery plans to include vegetative treatments, livestock exclusion fences or other non-structural practices.	Same	Same	Continue existing management.  (See additional protection provided under grazing management)
Rangeland Restoration and restored former agricultural lands	Focus on desirable non-native species for seeding	Focus on desirable non-native species for seeding	Restoration design dependent on site-specific needs and analysis	Amends all three RMPS by focusing on native species
Commercial forest products	Available case-by-case, pending site specific NEPA analysis, with standard stipulations. Constrained for critical wildlife, fisheries, visual resources.	Same [There are no BLM commercial forest lands within the river corridor.]	Same as John Day RMP	Timber removal within the river corridor will take place only when necessary to reduce risk of catastrophic timber loss due to insect infestation, disease or wildfire which would adversely affect river values. Upland sites subject to same protection as riparian sites.
Special forest, woodland and rangeland products	Available case-by-case, pending site specific NEPA analysis, with standard stipulations	Same	Same	No change

**Table 1. Existing Management of John Day, Two Rivers, and Baker Resource Management Plans and Amendments Resulting from John Day River Plan Decisions (continued)**

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Resource or Program Element	1985 John Day RMP Management Direction	1986 Two Rivers RMP Management Direction	1989 Baker RMP Management Direction	Amended Management Direction For BLM Lands and Resources in the John Day River Corridor
Livestock grazing	Emphasis on improving ecological conditions and resolution of resource problems through grazing systems or improvements. Permits renewed for 10 years and subject to rangeland standards and guidelines.	Emphasis on improving ecological conditions and resolution of resource problems through grazing systems or improvements. Permits renewed for 10 years and subject to rangeland standards and guidelines.	Emphasis on improving ecological conditions and resolution of resource problems through grazing systems or improvements. Permits renewed for 10 years and subject to rangeland standards and guidelines.	Emphasis on improving ecological conditions and resolution of resource problems through grazing systems or improvements. Allotment specific management adjustments. 2000cfs minimum flow required for grazing to occur Specified Recreation Sites closed to grazing
Noxious weeds	Control noxious weeds according to regional and local plans in conjunction with local weed control boards.	Same	Same	<b>Amends all three RMPs</b> No Change
Wildfire suppression and hazard reduction	Full suppression of all fires. Prescribed fire only with project plan/NFPA and interagency and adjacent land owner coordination.	Same	Same	No change
Agricultural lands	No applicable direction for the John Day corridor lands in Grant County.	Allocates 450 acres of upland for continued agricultural leases under prescribed conditions. Another 300 acres to be phased out of agricultural leases and reclaimed with water rights coordinated with State agencies.	No applicable direction for the John Day corridor lands in southern Umatilla County.	Dispose of 25.6 acres through exchange for more suitable lands within the river corridor. Allocate 359 acres of public lands (historically used for irrigated agriculture) to non-commodity uses, including wildlife food and cover crops or restoration of natural vegetation. Cooperate to dedicate associated water rights to instream uses. <b>Amends Two Rivers RMP</b>

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Note: Shaded rows indicate resources or program elements that were not considered planning issues for the John Day Plan.

Resource or Program Element	1985 John Day RMP Management Direction	1986 Two Rivers RMP Management Direction	1989 Baker RMP Management Direction	Amended Management Direction For BLM Lands and Resources in the John Day River Corridor
Fisheries	Utilize PACFISH and INFIISH (where Bull Trout are present) management standards and guidelines. Improve stream habitat to support resident and anadromous fish. Support State habitat goals through allocation of forage, livestock class restrictions, vegetation manipulation, road construction and human use limitations. Retain lands with high values and acquire others with important habitat.	Same	Same	No Change
Wildlife Habitat	Support State habitat goals through allocation of forage, livestock class restrictions, vegetation manipulation, road construction and human use limitations. Retain lands with high values and acquire others with important habitat.	Same	Same	No Change
Water Quantity and Quality	Meet State standards	Same	Meet State standards	No change but added emphasis and monitoring. Adopts State Scenic Waterway flows.
Paleontological Resources	Meet State standards	Same	Same	No Change; Clarifies RMPs but there is nothing unique to this plan
Cultural/historic resources	Meet State standards	Same	Not Addressed in RMP	No Change; Clarifies RMPs but there is nothing unique to this plan
Public Information and Education	Not Addressed in RMP	Not Addressed in RMP	Not Addressed in RMP	<b>Provisions Amend John Day and Two Rivers RMPs</b>
Law Enforcement and Emergency Services	Not Addressed in RMP	Not Addressed in RMP	Not Addressed in RMP	<b>Provisions Amend John Day and Two Rivers RMPs</b>

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Note: Shaded rows indicate resources or program elements that were not considered planning issues for the John Day Plan.

Resource or Program Element	1985 John Day RMP Management Direction	1986 Two Rivers RMP Management Direction	1989 Baker RMP Management Direction	Amended Management Direction For BLM Lands and Resources in the John Day River Corridor
Scenic Quality	Utilize standard procedures for projects which may affect areas with high visual quality.	Standard procedures for projects that may affect areas with high visual quality. The main stem John Day River from Service Creek downstream was identified as a area of high visual and natural quality.	Standard procedures for projects that may affect areas with high visual quality.	No change except, the WSAs will be managed as VRM Class I. The North Fork of the John Day river corridor and existing and proposed recreation sites will be managed as VRM III. The balance of the river corridor will be managed as VRM IV. <b>Amends John Day, Two Rivers, Baker RMPs</b>
Limits of acceptable change (LAC) Study	Not addressed in RMP	Not addressed in RMP	Not addressed in RMP	Administrative Action
Boating use levels	Not addressed in RMP	Not addressed in RMP	Not addressed in RMP	Specific targets for Segments 1, 2, and 3. Rely on LAC for future decisions.
Boating use allocation	Not addressed in RMP	Not addressed in RMP	Not addressed in RMP	Common pool. <b>Amends Two Rivers RMP</b>
Motorized boating	Not addressed in RMP	Not addressed in RMP	Not addressed in RMP	Specific guidance for Wild and Scenic River Segments <b>Amends John Day and Two Rivers RMPs</b>
Dispersed recreation	Emphasize primitive, unmotorized recreation.	Same	Same	Segment-specific decisions in Wild and Scenic River Segments. <b>Amends John Day and Two Rivers RMPs</b>
Developed recreation	Construct and maintain developed sites and trails based on public needs.	Not Addressed in RMP	Not Addressed in RMP	Proposes site-specific development in Wild and Scenic River segments. Improve or upgrade facilities when needed to protect resources. <b>Amends John Day, Two Rivers, Baker RMPs.</b>

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Note: Shaded rows indicate resources or program elements that were not considered planning issues for the John Day Plan.

Resource or Program Element	1985 John Day RMP Management Direction	1986 Two Rivers RMP Management Direction	1989 Baker RMP Management Direction	Amended Management Direction For BLM Lands and Resources in the John Day River Corridor
Public recreation access, Transportation system managements, road construction and maintenance	New roads considered case-by-case, pending NEPA analysis, with standard construction and maintenance stipulations.	Same	Site-specific changes	
Off-Highway Vehicle restrictions and closures	Utilize seasonal closures to enhance habitat and protect other resource values.	10,335 acres limited to existing roads and trails within river corridor. The balance is open year-long.	Use seasonal closures to enhance habitat and protect other resource values.	No RMP change; one site-specific seasonal closure
Commercial Use	Not addressed in RMP	Not addressed in RMP	Not addressed in RMP	Specific guidance for permits within planning area.
Locatable mineral resources	Meet State standards Open to entry (claims), except for waterpower withdrawals, which are subject to revocation and opening to public land or mineral laws. No new protective withdrawals proposed.	Same	Same	Any mining activity on all segments of the John Day River shall conform to the State Scenic Waterway requirements or the regulations of the federal government, whichever requirements are more stringent.

Withdraw from mineral entry all current or proposed administrative sites, riparian plant cultivation areas, campgrounds, day use, and boat ramp areas.

Amends John Day, Two Rivers, Baker RMPs

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Resource or Program Element	1985 John Day RMP Management Direction	1986 Two Rivers RMP Management Direction	1989 Baker RMP Management Direction	Amended Management Direction For BLM Lands and Resources in the John Day River Corridor
Salable common mineral materials	Available case-by-case, pending NEPA analysis	Same	Same	Salable mineral activity on BLM managed lands in all river segments shall be phased out as soon as regulations allow. Ongoing salable mineral activity on lands acquired in the future shall be phased out as soon as legally possible. Amends John Day, Two Rivers, Baker RMPs
Leasable minerals and energy	Available case-by-case, pending NEPA analysis, generally with standard stipulations	No Surface Occupancy (NSO) stipulations shall be attached to leases issued on all segments of the John Day River corridor.	Same as John Day RMP	Adds a No Surface Occupancy (NSO) stipulation to leases issued on all segments of the John Day River corridor. Future acquisitions are included. (WSAs were already protected by an NSO stipulation.) Amends John Day and Baker RMPs
Land-tenure Adjustment	Retain all BLM lands in the river corridor as land-tenure zone 1, except as required by the Oregon Land Exchange Act of 2000	Retain all BLM lands in the river corridor as land-tenure zone 1.	Retain all BLM lands in the river corridor as land-tenure zone 1, and acquire lands within Wild and Scenic river corridors.	Same
Utility corridors and rights-of-way	Available case-by-case in designated corridors and crossings of the river corridor, pending NEPA analysis, with standard stipulations	Same	Same	No change
Wilderness, Wild and Scenic (W&S) rivers and Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC)	Apply interim management policy to wilderness study areas. (There were no identified potential W&S rivers and no designated ACEC).	Apply interim management policy to wilderness study areas.	Apply interim management policy to wilderness study areas.	Designates new areas as WSAs. Amends Two Rivers RMP.

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Note: *Shaded rows indicate resources or program elements that were not considered planning issues for the John Day Plan.*

Resource or Program Element	1985 John Day RMP Management Direction	1986 Two Rivers RMP Management Direction	1989 Baker RMP Management Direction	Amended Management Direction For BLM Lands and Resources in the John Day River Corridor
Threatened, Endangered, Candidate and Sensitive Species Management	Take no actions that would jeopardize the continued existence of any federally listed threatened or endangered species. Monitor, maintain or improve habitat for threatened or endangered species.	Same as John Day	Take no actions that would jeopardize the continued existence of any federally listed threatened or endangered species. Avoid management actions that may result in disturbance and adverse impacts on crucial habitat for threatened, endangered, candidate, state listed and sensitive species.	No Change
Botanical resources	Inventories prior to any surface disturbing activities with appropriate mitigation or avoidance measures.	Same	Same	No Change
Wild horse herd management areas	Horse herd objectives established for Murderer's Creek herd on South Fork.	No designated horse herd areas established.	Same as Two Rivers	No Change